

IDOE Conventions

NOTE: For guidance specifically tailored to posting information on IDOE's website, please click [HERE](#) to review IDOE's web stylebook.

Acronyms – If used, acronyms should be spelled out upon first reference with the acronym in parenthesis. From there, the acronym may be used throughout the document. Example: The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) holds conferences every month. For those interested in attending conferences at IDOE, please register immediately.

Colons: Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence. Example: He made a goal: The academic achievement and career preparation of all Indiana students will be the best in the US and on par with the most competitive countries in the world.

Use a colon before a list when the list is preceded by a complete independent clause. Never use a colon to separate a preposition from its objects or a verb from its complements.

Some form of the word “follow” usually indicates a colon before a list.

Correct – John needs the following items: milk, eggs and bread.

John needs three items at the store: milk, eggs and bread.

Incorrect – John needs: milk, eggs and bread.

Items to purchase: milk, eggs and bread.

Items John needs include: milk, eggs and bread.

Commas – Only use a comma before a conjunction if you have a subject and predicate on both sides of the conjunction. Example: Dr. Bennett proposed a bold plan to improve student performance, and we're already seeing positive results.

Email addresses – The word “email” should be written without hyphens, and all email addresses should be “linked” so a user can simply click on it to send a message. Note: Microsoft programs should do this for you automatically if you press the space bar after entering the address.

End of Course Assessments (ECAs) – End of Course Assessments should NOT be hyphenated. Also, it is customary when writing about ECAs to list graduation exams first, in alphabetical order (Algebra I and English 10), followed by the Biology I assessment.

English/Language Arts – When referring to "English/Language Arts," all three words should be capitalized. "E/LA" is the appropriate acronym/abbreviation.

Font and size – All public IDOE documents should be written in Calibri and the body of the documents should be written in 11 point font.

Grades – Grades should be written in numeral form. Do not capitalize the word “grade” or “grades” unless it appears as the first word in a sentence. It is also acceptable to use K-12. Examples: The students in grades 8 to 10 are going on a field trip. All K-12 students are going on a field trip.

High ability – When referring to high ability students and programming, “high ability” should not be hyphenated.

Hyphens – For all department documents, use hyphens as sparingly as possible and only when they are needed to avoid ambiguity. Example: “Small business owner,” a business owner of small stature versus a “small-business owner,” a man who owns a small business.

IDOE – As with other acronyms, the Indiana Department of Education should be spelled out upon first reference with IDOE in parenthesis. From that point forward, if it is referenced again in the document, “IDOE” should be used. Do not use “the IDOE” or “the Department.”

INCC –Indiana’s Common Core Standards should be spelled out upon first reference with INCC in parenthesis. From that point forward, INCC should be used. Additionally, INCC should always be referenced as “Indiana’s Common Core Standards” and not “the Indiana Common Core Standards” or “the INCC.” Note also that “INCC” is plural.

Correct – INCC **were** adopted by the state board of education in 2010.

Incorrect – The INCC **is** more rigorous than Indiana’s existing academic standards.

Indentation – Do not indent paragraphs.

ISTEP+ – When referring to this exam, it should always be written as “ISTEP+”and not as “ISTEP.”

Kindergarten – Never capitalize the word “kindergarten” unless it appears at the beginning of a sentence. Example: The kindergarten class is going on a field trip.

Learning Connection – When encouraging people to access a community on the Learning Connection, instructions on how to do so should be included or include a link directly to the content referenced. Please use this example as a model for what your Learning Connection link and reference should look like.

Information and resources regarding _____ can be found in the _____ community on the [Learning Connection](#). Follow these steps to become a member of the _____ community.

- Log in to the [Learning Connection](#)
- Click on *Find a Community*
- Type in _____
- Click on *Join Community*

Lists – To the extent possible, all lists should be in alphabetical order. Bullets or numbering help with clarity.

Mathematics – Do not capitalize the word “mathematics” unless the word is used as the name of a specific subject or class. Example: He says he does not enjoy mathematics, but he scores highly on the Math portion of the ISTEP+ test.

Numbers – Spell out all numbers ten and under. Use numerals for anything over ten. Spell out all numbers that start a sentence. “One hundred” is not hyphenated.

Percentages – Use numerals and spell out the word “percent.” Example: The student answered 98 percent of the items correctly.

P.L. 221 – When referring to Public Law 221, the abbreviation should be written as “P.L. 221” with periods after the “P” and “L” and a space before “221.”

School years – When referring to a school year, it should be written as 2012-2013 and not as 2012-13.

Seasons – Do not capitalize names of seasons unless they are part of a proper name (summer, fall, winter, spring). Examples: We take the ISTEP+ in the spring, months before the Summer Olympic Games.

Spacing – Left justify all body text.

Superintendent – When referring to the state superintendent in writing, either Superintendent Bennett or Dr. Bennett is appropriate.

U.S. Department of Education – The correct acronym for the U.S. Department of Education is “ED” rather than “USDOE.” USDOE actually refers to the U.S. Department of Energy.

WebEx – When referring to WebEx presentations, WebEx is one word with a capital “W” and “E.”

Web site vs. website – Please use “website” when you refer to any site. This is the appropriate form according to the 2011 Associated Press Stylebook.

Website addresses – For written documents that may be distributed as hard copies, spell out any web addresses included in the document.